

ITEM 9- Information

May 18, 2005

Briefing on Draft

FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Staff

Recommendation: The Board will be briefed on the enclosed draft CCWP for FY 2006 (July 1, 2005 through June 30 2006), which was released for public comment at the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee meeting on May 12.

Issues:

Funding committed to date to the regional marketing program accounts for approximately 75 percent of the proposed budget. The funding for the remaining 25 percent is still under review by the state funding agencies.

Background:

The program has been restructured and streamlined in consultation with the state funding agencies. The TPB Technical Committee was briefed on the restructured program on May 6, 2005. The document was reviewed by the Commuter Connections Subcommittee on May 17, 2005. The final version will be presented for the Board's approval at its June 15 meeting.

**COMMUTER CONNECTIONS WORK PROGRAM
FOR THE GREATER WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN
REGION**

FY 2006

**DRAFT
May 10, 2005**

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD**

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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SUMMARY

The Fiscal Year 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) represents a restructured program that consists of regional activities, plus a set of jurisdictional activities that could be conducted at the discretion of individual states. This new CCWP structure is similar to the structure of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which comprises a core program of regional planning activities funded jointly by state and local jurisdictions plus a set of technical assistance activities funded by and conducted for individual agencies.

The regional state funding shares for the program elements are defined in terms of A formula agreed to by the three state funding agencies. The jurisdictional activities are defined by the costs allocated directly to the jurisdiction or jurisdictions that choose to conduct them. This new approach ensures that the regional activities upon which all other activities depend would be conducted regionally, and that the costs are allocated to the participating jurisdictions according to the agreed upon formula. At the same time, considerable flexibility is now available to the state funding agencies and other agencies to define and fund discretionary activities that respond to their individual policy and funding priorities.

Based on this new structure, the FY 2006 Commuter Connections program elements are classified as follows:

REGIONAL PROGRAMS	JURISDICTIONAL PROGRAMS
Commuter Operations Center	Employer Outreach*
Guaranteed Ride Home	Telework Resource Center
Marketing	InfoExpress Kiosks
Monitoring and Evaluation	

**Includes both a Regional and Jurisdictional Component*

The restructuring of the CCWP provides an opportunity for streamlining the administration and oversight processes for the program. The program has expanded incrementally over time, with different program elements having different jurisdictional participation and funding shares. As the program has become more complex, it became increasingly difficult to track how much each state funding agency was participating in and paying for each program element. Different ad hoc oversight groups were created over time for different program elements, resulting in a complex oversight structure that made it difficult and time-consuming for funding agencies, program participants, and staff to ensure that program progress was adequately reported and understood.

A new feature in the FY 2006 CCWP is an oversight structure similar to that for the UPWP for Commuter Connections. The Commuter Connections Subcommittee would continue to provide overall technical review of the regional program elements, as the TPB Technical Committee does for the UPWP, and a State Technical Working Group (STWG) would provide administrative and programmatic oversight of the core program elements by the funding agencies, again as is currently done for the UPWP. The STWG for Commuter Connections is the State TDM Work

Group and will meet regularly each month. Oversight for jurisdictional program elements would be provided by the states that are funding them. Specialized “ad hoc” groups would continue to meet as needed to address particular implementation issues, such as eligibility criteria for guaranteed ride home or the development of marketing materials.

The purpose of the State TDM Work Group will be to define the program content and budget for each fiscal year and to develop and approve a detailed annual work program in cooperation with COG/TPB staff that will be reviewed by program stakeholders, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, the TPB Technical Committee, and the TPB. The State TDM Work Group will also develop all RFP’s and RFQ’s as part of the work program and serve as the selection committee. The State TDM Work Group will review and approve all CCWP work products with input from the Commuter Connections Subcommittee. The State TDM Work Group will also chair the group and establish meeting agenda’s on a rotation basis between the three states on an annual basis. Program performance measures will also be put in place by the State TDM Work Group that will include an end of year survey of the member jurisdictions of Commuter Connections to determine program satisfaction and value the program adds to their jurisdictions’ TDM efforts. Findings from the end of year survey will be used to make changes, as appropriate, to the program and the manner in which it is implemented.

The key elements of the FY06 Commuter Connections Work Program may be summarized as follows:

- The Commuter Operations Center provides ridematching services to commuters through a central toll free number “1-800-745-RIDE”;
- Guaranteed Ride Home provides users of alternative commute modes up to four free rides home per year in a taxi or rental car in the event of an unexpected personal or family emergency or unscheduled overtime;
- Marketing of alternative commute options provides continual regional marketing of car/vanpooling, teleworking, mass transit, Live Near Where You Work, Bike to Work Day, and Guaranteed Ride Home aimed at persuading commuters to switch to alternative commute modes from the use of single-occupant vehicles, as well as persuading commuters currently using alternative commute modes to continue to use those modes.
- Monitoring and Evaluation provides data collection and analysis activities as well as program tracking and monitoring reports for each program area.
- Employer Outreach supports outreach and marketing efforts to the region’s employers to encourage use by their employees of alternative commute modes such as ridesharing, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking; including assisting employers to hold bicycling seminars for employees, and maintaining an up-to-date regional Bicycling Guide.

- Telework provides information and resources to employers on the benefits of teleworking and assists them in setting up telework programs for their employees;
- InfoExpress Kiosks are located at selected shopping centers and other high pedestrian activity areas and provide commuting information to the general public;

Figure 3 illustrates the Commuter Connections service area is actually much larger than the MSA for workers eligible for the guaranteed ride home (GRH) program, and larger still for workers who can access the Commuter Connections ride-matching services. The total population in the Commuter Connections service area has 10 million resident workers with almost half commuting into the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for work purposes.

Program Background

Commuter Connections is a continuing commuter assistance program for the Washington region which encourages commuters to use alternatives to the private automobile, including ride-sharing, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, and walking. The program has evolved and expanded over the past three decades following its inception in 1974 as the Commuter Club. In the mid-1980s, in an effort to better share regional ridesharing information the Commuter Club was expanded into the Ride-Finders Network, which included Alexandria, Fairfax County, Montgomery County, Prince William County and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission. By 1996, after steady growth in both size and strength, the Ride Finders Network became Commuter Connections, the commuter transportation agency serving the Washington metropolitan region, encompassing twelve counties, four cities, and eight federal agencies. The Commuter Operations Center component of the current Commuter Connections Program represents the evolution of the earlier Commuter Club and Ride-Finders Network programs.

In the mid-1990s, several new elements were added to the Commuter Connections Program as Transportation Emissions Reduction Measures (TERMs) to help meet regional air quality conformity requirements. All of these measures were designed to produce specific reductions in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) by reducing vehicle trips and vehicle miles of travel associated with commuting. The measures were developed by the Travel Management Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee, and adopted into the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB). These measures were funded jointly by the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Departments of Transportation, with some variation in funding shares for the different measures.

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Date Implemented</u>
Employer Outreach	1997
Guaranteed Ride Home	1997
Commuter Operations Center	1974

Metropolitan Washington Telework Resource Center	1996
Integrated Ridesharing	1996
Employer Outreach for Bicycling	1998
Mass Marketing of Alternative Commute Options	2003

As the program elements shown above were implemented their performance was evaluated over time, and for FY06 the measures have been revised to focus resources on the most effective program components. Total daily impacts of the Commuter Connections program are estimated to be:

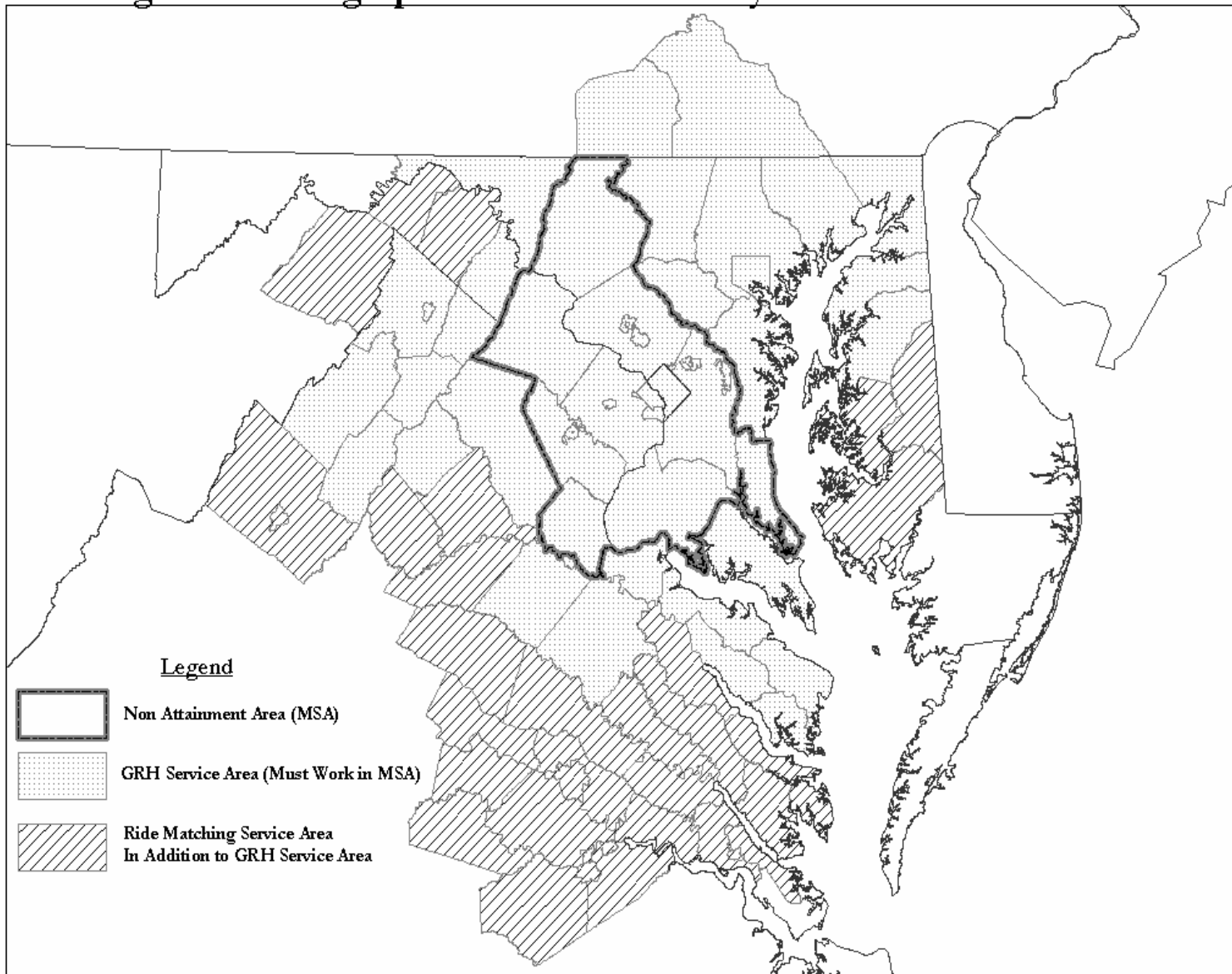
VT Reductions:	111,413
VMT Reductions:	1,959,263
NOx Reductions(Tons):	2.3
VOC Reductions Tons):	1.22

Extensive monitoring and evaluation have been carried out for the Commuter Connections Program over the past several years, and comprehensive data sets are available for reviewing the performance of individual program elements and identifying areas for both strengthening the performance of the program and streamlining the oversight and management procedures. The Program has been shown through the 2004 State of the Commute Survey and other earlier evaluation studies to be a highly cost-effective way to reduce vehicle trips (VT), vehicle miles of travel (VMT), and vehicle emissions associated with commuting. The following overall cost-effectiveness measures for the Commuter Connections Program are based on the results of the 2004 State of the Commute Survey and other recent evaluation data:

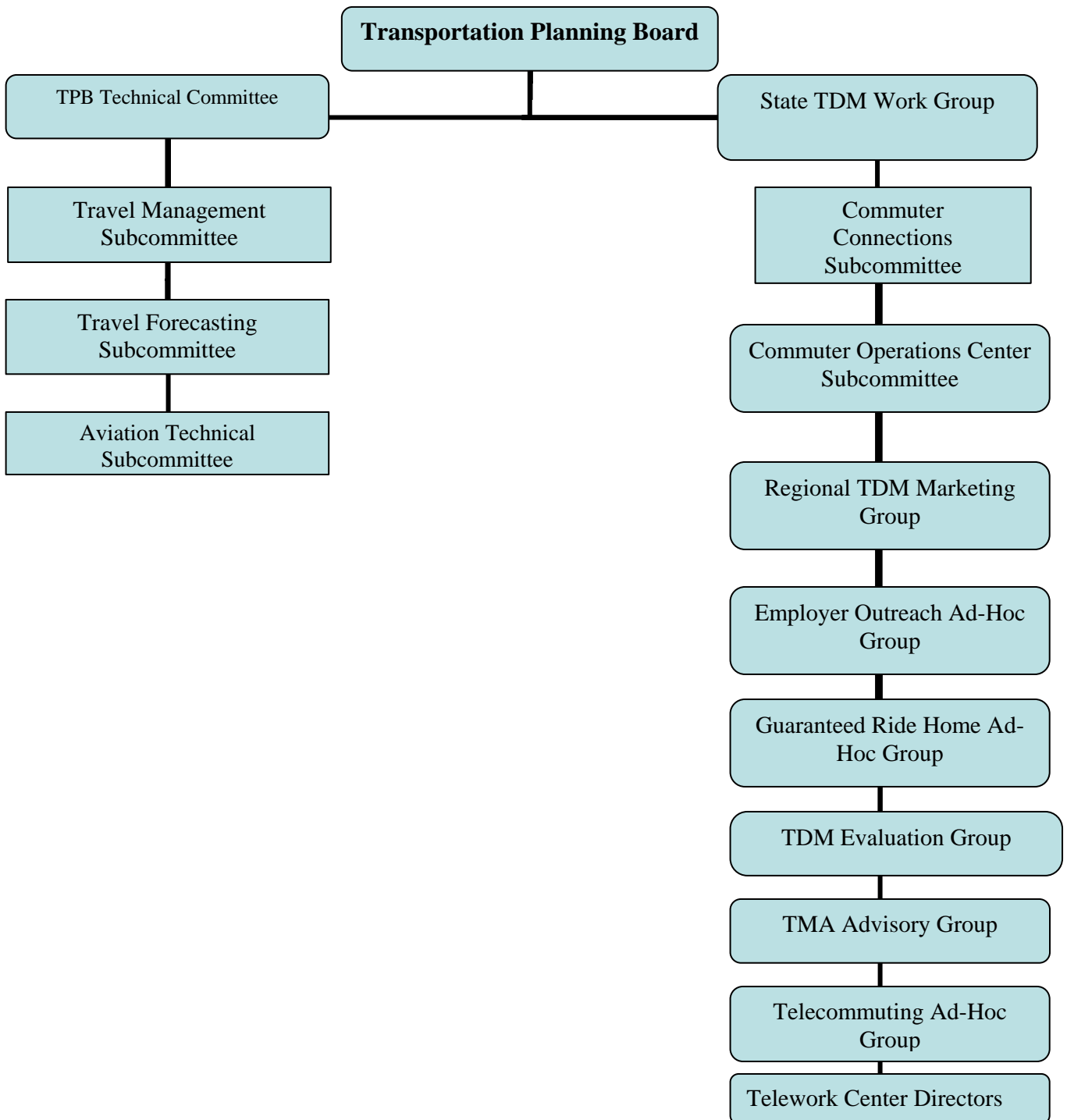
Cost per VT reduced:	\$0.15
Cost per VMT reduced:	\$0.01
Cost per ton of NOx reduced:	\$6,000
Cost per ton of VOC reduced:	\$12,000

The Commuter Connections Program is generally regarded as among the most effective commuter assistance programs in the nation in terms of reductions effected in vehicle trips and vehicle miles of travel. Existing data collected on Commuter Connections program performance has been used to refine and enhance the program and to streamline procedures for oversight and administration of the program.

Figure 1: Geographic Areas Serviced by Commuter Connections



COMMUTER CONNECTIONS STRUCTURE



**Table 1
FY 2006 COMMUTER CONNECTIONS BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAM EXPENDITURES**

WORK ACTIVITY	DIRECT SALARIES STAFF	M& A 27%	LEAVE BENEFITS 18%	FRINGE BENEFITS 16%	INDIRECT COSTS 42 %	DATA & PC COSTS	CONTRACT SERVICES	DIRECT COSTS	TOTAL
Commuter Operations Center	\$111,347	\$30,064	\$25,454	\$26,698	\$88,856	\$49,500*	\$0	\$39,607	\$371,526
Guaranteed Ride Home	\$64,419	\$17,393	\$14,366	\$15,069	\$53,024	\$25,000	\$115,000	\$205,037	\$509,308
Marketing	\$137,812	\$37,209	\$30,856	\$32,364	\$100,061	\$2,500	\$510,000	\$1,249,762	\$2,100,564
Monitoring and Evaluation	\$118,938	\$32,113	\$27,189	\$28,518	\$86,838	\$0	\$105,000	\$8,872	\$407,468
Employer Outreach	\$30,580	\$8,257	\$6,991	\$7,332	\$22,327	\$3,000	\$0	\$672,109	\$750,596
Telework	\$62,731	\$16,937	\$14,340	\$15,041	\$45,801	\$0	\$0	\$7,276	\$162,126
InfoExpress Kiosks	\$25,383	\$6,853	\$5,803	\$6,086	\$18,533	\$0	\$75,000	\$17,496	\$155,154
TOTAL	\$551,210	\$148,826	\$124,999	\$131,108	\$415,440	\$80,000	\$805,000	\$2,200,159	\$4,456,742

** The Commuter Operations Center includes \$49,500 in local membership fees for Data & PC Costs*

Detailed Task Descriptions and Cost Estimates for the FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program

I. COMMUTER OPERATIONS CENTER

The Commuter Operations Center has been in existence since 1974 and provides local jurisdictions, Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) and federal government agencies a centralized database for commuting information. As part of the program, COG/TPB staff provides local agency coordination, training, and technical assistance, transportation information services to the general public, maintenance of the regional commuter database system, evaluation services, and a wide array of commuter transportation choices.

The Commuter Operations Center is a regional program and consists of four project areas listed below. The total annual project cost for the Commuter Operations Center regional program tasks is \$322,026*

** Total Annual Project cost does not include \$49,500 in local membership fees which are used for work station, data communication, and equipment upgrade charges.*

A. LOCAL AGENCY COORDINATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Each month, COG receives several hundred applications for ridematching and transit information. More than 90% of these applications are received through the Commuter Connections Web site. COG staff reviews and processes all applications received through the Web site. Matchlists for carpool and vanpool information are sent daily by mail or email (depending on the applicant's preference). An email notification is sent to the client member serving the applicant's home jurisdiction. This email serves as a notice that an application was received from someone living in that jurisdiction and that the client member staff should follow up with that commuter to provide any additional assistance. Applications received at COG through the mail and fax are forwarded to the client member serving the applicant's home jurisdiction for entry into the rideshare database.

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide technical support and training to rideshare member agencies for the regional Commuter Connections ridematching software system (CCRS). Staff will continue to review and distribute ridematching applications received from employers and the general public. Matchlist and renewal notice generation and distribution services will also be provided through COG. COG/TPB will produce client member reports, and provide staff support and coordination to the Commuter Connections State TDM Work Group, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, the Commuter Operations Center Subcommittee, and the TMA Advisory Group. COG/TPB staff will also fulfill daily client member data requests. Federal Agency Employee Transportation Coordinator training will be coordinated and in some instances given by COG/TPB staff. Staff will also produce an annual Commuter Connections Work Program for FY 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$121,203

Products: Documentation of specific support actions taken, documentation of all Subcommittee and group meetings, daily technical support and documentation, member site visits for software installation and technical support, daily Matchlist generation and distribution, software training for client members, training manual updates, monthly and bi-weekly statistical reports, monthly commuter renewal notices generation and distribution, Federal agency ETC training, completion and monitoring of the Emergency Management Contingency Plan, update and distribution of bi-annual Transportation Demand Management Resources Directory, maintenance and updates to the Federal ETC web site, production of the FY 2007 Commuter Connections Work Program.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

B. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SERVICES

The Commuter Operations Center provides basic carpool/vanpool, transit, telecommuting, bicycling, walking, Ozone Action Days, Welfare to Work, and other regional commuter related information services.

COG has provided these transportation information services for 30 years in the Metropolitan Washington region.

COG staffs the regional commute information telephone number 1-800-745-RIDE. Calls received at COG are transferred to the local client-member site (based on jurisdiction of residence of the caller) where applicable. COG/TPB staff provides transportation information services to those commuters who cannot be assigned to a client member site, including residents of the District of Columbia. COG receives several hundred calls per week through the 800 number. COG staff also responds to daily requests and questions received by email.

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public by telephone, web site, electronically, or through printed information. Staff will continue processing applications from the general public and/or from Commuter Connections client members who request the service on a permanent or temporary basis. COG/TPB staff will answer the regional "800" telephone line and respond to e-mails on information requests from the Commuter Connections web site. Over 90% of requests are received through the Web site, compared to less than 10% by telephone.

Cost Estimate: \$93,491

Products: Provide commuter traveler information on alternatives to driving alone to the general public by telephone, web site, electronically, or printed information.

Process applications from the general public and answer the regional "800" line and respond to e-mails from the Commuter Connections web site and the provision of general public customer service.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

C. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SOFTWARE, HARDWARE, AND DATABASE MAINTENANCE

The regional Commuter Connections Ridematching Software (CCRS) system is provided as a regional resource link to nearly 30 client member sites that include local rideshare agencies, Transportation Management Associations, and federal government agencies. The client member sites use the link to service their local commuters transportation needs for alternative commuting information.

This project includes the daily routine monitoring and maintenance of the CCRS. Tasks include: the daily backup of the CCRS hardware and software database, the maintenance of rideshare and Web site maps on the file transfer protocol (ftp) servers, the maintenance of the rideshare database, software files and server, the maintenance and update of Commuter Connections web site data, and the maintenance of the application processing E-Communicator software.

This project will also include the ongoing migration of the CCRS on to the Commuter Connections web site and the review and development of a new Web-based transportation system software system that would include the merging of the GRH, telework, and employer outreach databases as well as the review of including a special events, carpool incentive, and program evaluation software modules.

Cost Estimate: \$86,578

Products: Provide daily routine monitoring and maintenance of the CCRS for approximately 30 client member sites in the region. Web migration of ridematching software and review and development of other TDM program service software, web site and map server maintenance and updates.*

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

** Estimated costs do not include full testing and implementations costs for the web migration and database merge projects. A separate project is being considered for the full development of this proposed project.*

D. COMMUTER INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Commuter Information System project provides the CCRS with a GIS based information that includes transit stop data, telework center locations, park and ride lot locations, and bicycling information on the ridematch lists generated by the CCRS.

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue integration activities of new transit, telework center, and park and ride lot data into the CCRS server. Staff will also continue to obtain updated transit data and street centerline information from local jurisdictions and transit properties and reformat data into GIS for use on the CCRS. Updates to park-and-ride and telework center datasets for use on the CCRS will continue as will updates to the interactive GIS-based web site application to include updated local and regional information for 11,000 plus transit, telework center, and bicycle lanes/paths datasets. The updated information will also be packaged to be uploaded onto the InfoExpress kiosk software system.

Cost Estimate: \$20,754

Products: Updated local and regional information for transit, telework center locations, park and ride lots, and bicycling information which will be used in the CCRS and on the GIS-based web site application as well as on the InfoExpress kiosks.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

II. REGIONAL GUARANTEED RIDE HOME PROGRAM

The regional Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program eliminates a major barrier to using transit, carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling or walking to work. Studies have shown that a commuter's fear of being "stranded" at work if they or a family member become ill, or if they must work unexpected overtime, is one of the most compelling reasons commuters do not rideshare or use transit to travel to work. The regional GRH program eliminates this barrier by providing a free ride home in the event of an unexpected personal emergency or unscheduled overtime. The GRH program's free ride home is offered only to commuters that carpool, vanpool, use transit, bicycle, or walk to work at least two days per work week.

As a result of the GRH program, some single occupant vehicle drivers will switch to a ridesharing or transit commuting alternative, and current ridesharing and transit users will increase the usage of these alternative commute modes. The GRH program is an insurance program for those commuters who do not drive alone to their worksite.

The Guaranteed Ride Home program is a regional program and consists of the project area outlined below. The total annual project cost for the Guaranteed Ride Home regional program task is \$509,308*

**285,500 of this budget includes competitively bid contract work for daily operations and ride providers.*

A. GENERAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

GRH transportation service is provided by several taxi companies, a rental car company, and a paratransit company, all on contract with COG. Commuters make their GRH trip request through a menu option provided on COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number. This menu option transfers calls for GRH trips directly to an operations contractor. This contractor reviews and assesses the trip request and approves or denies the request based on the GRH Participation Guidelines. The contractor then arranges the approved trips with the appropriate transportation contractor.

COG staff processes all GRH applications received by mail, fax, and the Commuter Connections Website. Using the GRH software system, COG registers qualifying applicants, produces GRH registration ID cards, and sends ID card and participation guidelines to new registrants. Commuters can obtain information about the GRH program and complete an application on the Commuter Connections Website, www.commuterconnections.org. Commuters may also call COG's Commuter Connections 800 telephone number, 1-800-745-RIDE, to ask questions about the GRH program and/or request information and an application. The 800 number is equipped with a menu so that all questions and requests for information and applications are taken by COG staff.

COG staff also mails GRH applications to GRH users who have used the GRH

program without formally registering. GRH guidelines permit a commuter to use the GRH service one time as a “one-time exception” before they register. Also, COG staff mails transit vouchers to GRH users who used transit as part of their GRH trip. All vouchers and invoices from transportation service providers are processed by COG staff.

The operations contractor contacts, by telephone, GRH registrants whose registration is near expiration and re-registers the qualifying commuters. While the system of calling commuters has been successful, many messages left on commuters’ voice mail are not returned. For this reason, COG mails a re-registration notice to commuters who could not be contacted by telephone. The notice contains an application which the commuter can complete and send to COG to re-register. The commuter can also call Commuter Connections or visit the Commuter Connections Website to re-register.

COG staffs and coordinates an annual GRH Ad-Hoc Group meeting. The Ad-Hoc Group reviews the GRH participation guidelines and recommends changes. These recommendations are presented to the State TDM Work Group and the Commuter Connections Subcommittee for their review and approval. The Ad-Hoc Group has made recommendations to modify and add participation guidelines to better convey the GRH trip authorization, GRH re-registration, and one-time exception rules and restrictions.

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations services. Day to day operations include confirming ride request eligibility, dispatching rides through the 10 ride service providers, tracking ride requests in the GRH database, processing invoices for payment for ride service providers, the daily operations contractor and for the general public for transit vouchers. COG/TPB staff will continue to respond to the general public and to GRH applicants for registrations and re-registrations to the program. Registered commuters will be notified when their GRH registration is about to expire. Staff will continue to prepare and send new and re-registration GRH ID cards, registration letters, and participation guidelines on a weekly basis. Staff will also continue to monitor and maintain the GRH applicant database and server. COG/TPB staff will continue to update and maintain program participation guidelines, staff the annual GRH Ad-Hoc Group meeting, and provide annual customer service training to the daily operations contractor and COG/TPB staff assigned to the project.

Cost Estimate: \$509,308*

Products: Respond to requests from the general public for registration and re-registration to the program. Notify commuters when registration is about to expire.

Prepare and send GRH new and re-registration ID cards,

registration letters and participation guidelines on a weekly basis.

Monitor GRH applicant database and server.

Management and monitoring of contract services for day-to-day operations, and 10 service providers. This includes processing invoices for payment for contractors and for the general public for transit vouchers.

Update and maintain program participation guidelines.

Staff annual GRH Ad-Hoc Group meeting.

Annual customer service training.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

**285,500 of this budget includes competitively bid contract work for daily operations and ride providers.*

III. MARKETING

The Marketing program includes the use of media and other forms of communication at high reach and frequency levels to communicate the benefits of alternative commute methods to Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) commuters most likely to shift to non-SOV travel. The campaign delivers a “brand promise” for Commuter Connections as an umbrella solution for commuters seeking alternative commuting options within the region. The campaign also aims to encourage current non-SOV populations to continue using alternative transportation modes for commuting. In addition, the marketing initiative encourages employers to provide alternative commuting benefits to their employees. The campaign complements other on-going Commuter Connections program efforts that have been implemented in the region, increasing their overall efficiency and effectiveness. The program will include TDM marketing on ridesharing, transit, Guaranteed Ride Home, Telecommuting, Bicycling/Walking, Live Near Where You Work, and Employer Outreach program activities.

Competitive procurements expertise is obtained to develop a regional marketing campaign, with input from the state funding agencies and the Regional TDM Marketing Group. The program builds upon current regional TDM marketing efforts by state, regional and local agencies to establish continuous year round marketing for regional TDM programs.

The regional Marketing program provides marketing support through the Regional TDM Marketing Group, which has been in place since 1996 and provides a cooperative regional forum for sharing marketing ideas and coordinating regional efforts. Support includes monitoring the implementation of regional and/or individual agency TDM marketing

campaigns.

Marketing and promotion of alternative commute modes and incentives have been a major component of the Commuter Connections regional marketing campaigns. The campaigns also include direct mail promotion of the TDM programs and incentives to several hundred thousand households and to employers, radio, television, and web advertisements. Other promotion of TDM programs includes on-site promotions at employment sites. The direct mail piece is different for each campaign in order to attract attention, and periodically, new radio advertisements are produced to keep the message “fresh.” Partnerships between COG and area transit agencies have also enabled the promotion of incentives such as the GRH program to transit riders and automobile drivers.

Marketing is a regional program and consists of two project areas listed below. The total annual project cost for the program tasks is \$2,100,564. Funding committed to date to the regional marketing program accounts for approximately 75 percent of the proposed budget. The funding for the remaining 25 percent is still under review by the state funding agencies.

A. TDM MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Commuter Connections Web site advertisement will be provided through banner ads and placement of keyword search engine sponsorships. Regional on-line yellow pages advertising would be provided. Bus and rail advertising will be negotiated. Staff will update and implement a public relations plan, provide staff support to the Regional TDM Marketing Group and maintain the Extranet for posting marketing and advertising materials for review by the State TDM Work Group and regional marketing workgroup members.

COG/TPB staff will coordinate marketing and promotional activities with transit, ridesharing, and other transportation demand management agencies. Much of this coordination will be conducted through COG’s Regional TDM Marketing Group which is staffed by COG/TPB.

A regional commute alternatives newsletter, *Commuter Connections*, will be published quarterly and distributed to several thousand employers. In addition, COG/TPB staff works with the General Services Administration to produce a quarterly Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) newsletter insertion into the Commuter Connections newsletter, for distribution to more than 150 Federal ETC’s. The regional Resource Guide and Strategic Marketing Plan will also be updated with input from member agencies.

This project includes the production of radio spots in English and Spanish to promote alternative mode use, the use of the regional GRH program, teleworking, telework centers, the implementation of employer-based commuter benefit programs, and incentive based programs. The overall objective of the project will be to continue to brand Commuter Connections. A marketing/advertising/public relations contractor will be used to produce the creative, copywriting, and public relations plan. COG/TPB staff also will review and participate in special event advertising (e.g. baseball games or other events that will help

boost the Commuter Connections brand). This project also includes day to day monitoring and management of the marketing/advertising/public relations contractor and the processing of media placements.

COG/TPB staff will also place advertisements for Commuter Connections in the telephone directories of both the Verizon and Yellow Book Yellow pages. Ads are also placed on the Super Pages internet directory and the Yellowbook.com directory.

COG/TPB staff will coordinate and participate in on-site commuter promotions at employment sites (public and private sector), retail centers, transit centers, and special events throughout the year. On average COG staff attends six to ten events a year.

COG/TPB staff will coordinate the annual Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards for employers showing commitment towards voluntarily implementing commute alternative programs and telecommuting at their respective worksite(s).

COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update collateral materials and web based information on the regional GRH program.

COG/TPB staff will also participate in the research and design of a "Live Near Where You Work" program in conjunction with the State TDM Work Group.

Cost Estimate: \$2,003,412

Products: Staff the Regional TDM Marketing Group and maintain the Extranet for posting marketing and advertising materials for review by workgroup members.

Evaluate effectiveness of advertising campaigns through call volumes, internet hits, and placement rate study.

Monitor and manage advertising contract and process media placement invoices.

Update and implement earned media plan.

Monitoring the implementation of regional marketing campaigns.

Production of a quarterly newsletter for employers and Federal agency Employee Transportation Coordinators.

Placement of advertisements in telephone directories.

Updating marketing materials and the Commuter Connections web site.

Annual Employer Recognition Awards.

Annual update of the Regional TDM Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide.

On-site employer commuter promotions that promote all alternative commute modes at employer commuter transportation information events.

Maintain and Update collateral materials and web based information on all alternative commute modes.

Placing radio and TV spots in English and Spanish using the Commuter Connections marketing themes for all TDM program services (ridesharing, transit, GRH, telecommuting, telework centers, employer outreach, etc).

Conducting special event advertising that tailors the Commuter Connections messages to special events such as baseball games.

Management and oversight of marketing/advertising/public relations contractor(s).

Production of radio spots in English and Spanish to promote use of all regional alternative commute modes and TDM program services.

Web site advertisement through banner ads.

Placement of keyword search engine sponsorships.

Regional yellow pages and on line advertising.

Special event advertising (i.e. minor league baseball).

Bus and rail advertising.

Research and Design of "Live Near Where You Work" program

Monthly progress reports and an annual progress report.

Schedule:

July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

FY 2005 Annual Progress Report: September 2005

2005 Strategic Marketing Plan and Resource Guide: October 2005

B. BIKE TO WORK DAY

A major activity with regard to employer outreach for bicycling is the annual Bike to Work day event. Participation in this event has grown steadily each year and includes bicyclists from all jurisdictions in the region. Commuter Connections participation in Bike to Work day includes support for the planning and promotion of the event, and assistance at the various “pit stops” on the day of the event.

During, FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to support and implement a regional Bike To Work Day event and promote the event to employers.

This will be accomplished through media placements and marketing coordination activities with the marketing/advertising/public relations contractor.

Cost Estimate: \$97,152

Products: Implement regional Bike To Work Day event and promote to employers and to the general public.

FY 2005 Bike To Work Day Event Summary Report

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

FY 2005 Bike To Work Day Event Summary Report: October 2005

IV. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Monitoring and Evaluation program will provide overall program and individual project results when appropriate for the various projects in the CCWP that will be used to track progress for the regionally adopted Transportation Emission Reduction Measures (TERMS). One project will solely focus on those activities directly related to data collection and analysis for the TERMS. Results from this project will directly impact the TERM Analysis report for Commuter Connections and the final results will be used to update the regional TERM Tracking Sheet.

The second project area will include the ongoing tracking and monitoring activities for each of the CCWP program areas, including the Commuter Operations Center, Guaranteed Ride Home, Employer Outreach, the Metropolitan Washington Telework Resource Center, and Marketing. In some instances, direct customer satisfaction surveys will be performed to gauge the level of satisfaction for program areas such as Guaranteed Ride Home and Employer Outreach. Monthly progress reports and an annual progress report will also be produced by COG/TPB staff.

The Monitoring and Evaluation program is a regional program and consists of the two project areas outlined below. The total annual project cost for the program tasks is \$407,468.

A. TERM DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

An annual Placement Rate Survey is conducted in the fall. This survey is conducted from a sample size of 700 first quarter applicants from the ridematching database. The Placement Rate Survey's main purpose is to determine the percentage, or rate, of applicants that make a commute mode change as a result of obtaining information through Commuter Connections. Results from the survey are used to calculate the vehicle trip reduction factor, estimate vehicle trips and miles reduced, estimate the reductions in vehicle emissions, and applicant characteristics. COG publishes a report each year showing the survey findings.

Additional work will also be conducted to finalize the 2005 TERM Analysis report results. Results from the report are used in the TPB TERM Tracking sheet and for regional air quality conformity. Various presentations of the results will also be prepared and given to the State TDM Work Group, the Commuter Connections TDM Evaluation Group, the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, the TPB Technical Committee, and the TPB. The evaluation contractor will also be fulfilling data requests that are received or needed by COG/TPB staff during the course of the fiscal year.

The administration of a database Placement Rate survey and production of an annual report on the results will be provided. COG/TPB staff will also provide day to day management and monitoring of evaluation contract services and will report results through monthly progress reports and an annual progress report.

During FY 2006, data collection activities from local sales territories will continue as will the review of employer database records and the classification of employer records into levels of participation. Quarterly level of effort verification statements will be produced by COG/TPB staff.

Contract oversight for employer database tabulation and reporting will be provided by COG/TPB staff. Results from the employer database tabulated surveys is used to estimate the participation rates and impacts for employer-based TDM programs reported from the local sales jurisdictions.

Cost Estimate: \$234,632 *

Products: Placement rate survey and report, 2005 TERM Analysis Report, TDM program data requests.

Data collection activities from ten local sales territories.

Review of employer database records.

Classification of employer records into levels of participation.

Quarterly level of effort verification statements.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006
2005 TERM Analysis Report: August 2005
FY 2006 Placement Rate Report: May 2006

**\$105,000 of this budget includes competitively bid out contract work for Employer Survey data tabulation and for the FY06 Placement Rate Survey and to finalize the 2005 TERM Analysis Report and associated data requests and presentations.*

B. PROGRAM MONITORING AND TRACKING ACTIVITIES

COG/TPB staff will prepare monthly, quarterly, and FY 2005 annual summary of program statistics of the number and type of commuter traveler requests filled by COG and other client member program sites. During FY2006 COG/TPB staff will continue to produce monthly progress reports and an annual progress report on the regional Guaranteed Ride Home program. Staff will collect and analyze data from the monthly customer satisfaction survey for program users, and administer a customer satisfaction survey based on feedback from program users. Staff will produce an annual report on the findings. Survey results will be used to change program guidelines and/or policies as needed.

Staff will also monitor monthly progress for local Employer Outreach sales jurisdictions based on their approved Scopes of Work and contract project goals and provide direct assistance when necessary. Monthly progress reports and level of effort tracking sheets listing results of each local sales jurisdiction will be prepared. An annual detailed snapshot of overall progress will be provided to appropriate DOT funding agencies for their respective jurisdictions. COG/TPB staff will also continue to administer and produce the annual Employer Customer Satisfaction Survey and report. COG/TPB staff will oversee a regional monitoring and evaluation program for Employer Outreach which includes data collection activities from local employer outreach sales territories. Local jurisdiction contract performance monitoring for Employer Outreach goals will also be a part of this activity.

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will also continue to produce Employer Case Studies showcasing telework program results. Results from Employer Telework telemarketing and outreach services will be documented in terms of level of effort and progress and shown in monthly progress reports.

Formal monthly documentation will also be provided on level of effectiveness and results from telemarketing and sales and outreach activities for employer-based telework programs. COG/TPB staff will conduct a follow-up survey and prepare a report documenting the results of the FY 2005 Employer Workshop participants. Overall monitoring and evaluating employer-based telework programs throughout the region will continue .

Staff will also evaluate effectiveness of advertising campaigns through call volumes, internet hits, and the annual placement rate study. Marketing campaigns will be monitored through lead analysis and detailed campaign summary results. An event summary report

will also be produced for the FY 2005 regional Bike To Work Day event. An overall internal program survey will also be conducted to measure the overall satisfaction of the program by the local jurisdictions.

Monthly progress reports will be provided for all program areas in the FY 2006 CCWP and an annual progress report for FY 2005 will be produced.

Cost Estimate: \$172,836

Products: Produce monthly progress reports for the Commuter Operations Center, Guaranteed Ride Home, Employer Outreach, Marketing, and Evaluation programs.

Produce FY 2005 annual progress report.

Collect and analyze data from monthly GRH customer satisfaction survey for program users. Produce annual customer satisfaction survey from FY 2005 and report based on feedback from program users.

Production of monthly Employer Outreach progress report and level of effort tracking sheet listing results of each local sales jurisdiction.

Administer and produce annual Employer Customer Satisfaction Survey

Conduct follow-up telework survey and produce report for the FY 2005 Employer Workshop participants.

Production of Employer case studies on telecommuting.

Marketing lead analysis and campaign summary results.

Conduct jurisdictional internal program satisfaction survey.

Production of FY 2005 Bike To Work Day report.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006
FY05 Annual Progress Report: September 2005
FY05 GRH Customer Satisfaction Survey: March 2006
FY05 Employer Customer Satisfaction Survey: February 2006
FY05 Employer Telework Workshops Survey Report: January 2006
FY05 Bike To Work Day Report: October 2005

V. EMPLOYER OUTREACH

The Employer Outreach program is designed to increase outreach efforts in ten jurisdictions located in the region's MSA. COG's Commuter Connections staff provides overall administration and arranges for sales training and support as well as technical training on the regional sales contact management database.

Most employers who promote commute alternatives do so for practical reasons associated with the operation of their businesses. But the community as a whole benefits from commute alternatives programs, which improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and support economic development. For this reason, many local governments in the region continue to offer programs that encourage commute options at the employment site. These programs range from marketing efforts and incentive programs conducted through ridesharing programs to "adequate public facilities ordinances" that have trip reduction requirements for affected employers.

The Commuter Connections program's ongoing goal has been to weave existing local employer and government programs into a coherent, voluntary regional network, and to promote ways in which worksite commute alternatives programs may grow, without imposing burdensome mandates upon employers.

Regional Components of the Employer Outreach Program include:

- 1) Maintaining and updating a computerized regional employer/employee sales contact database to facilitate local efforts and avoid duplication.
- 2) Providing coordinated marketing materials for the program.
- 3) Coordinating technical training and offering sales support and training for the sales and service representatives in each of the participating jurisdictions.
- 4) Supporting the Employer Outreach Ad-Hoc Group of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee which provides guidance to the program.
- 5) Maintaining close coordination with WMATA's Metrochek/SmartBenefits program sales staff, and/or their assigned consultant(s).
- 6) Providing information on voluntary commuting actions that can be taken by employers and the general public to reduce mobile source emissions, particularly on Ozone Action days, through the Clean Air Partners program.
- 7) Synchronizing and updating individual local sales contact databases with Commuter Connections on a regular basis.
- 8) Provide bicycling information to area employers to help and support bicycling to work

by their employees.

The regional components of the program are listed in the three project tasks below. The total annual cost for the regional components of the Employer Outreach program are \$47,561.

Jurisdictional Components of the Employer Outreach Program include:

- 1) Contacting individual employers in each locality, (carried out by the local sales and service representatives through the regional contact sales database which Commuter Connections maintains and updates.)
- 2) Accomplishing local program goals via staff, contractors, TMA's, or other entities. A scope of work is submitted to COG to expedite an annual program contract for each locality, and funding is allocated to localities based upon guidance to COG from the state funding agencies.
- 3) Overseeing pass-thru funding to local sales jurisdictions for the implementation of voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites.
- 4) Updating and printing sales materials and employer case studies both in hard copy and for inclusion on the Commuter Connections web site.

The jurisdictional components of the program are outlined in the project task below. The total annual costs for the regional components of the Employer Outreach program are \$703,035.

Regional Component Project Tasks

A. **REGIONAL EMPLOYER DATABASE MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING**

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update the hardware and software for the computerized regional employer ACT! Database and coordinate training and technical assistance to local sales jurisdictions requesting it as well as monthly regional database synchronizations.

Cost Estimate: \$32,561

Products: Coordination of Employer Outreach regional database synchronizations and provision of sales representative database training as needed, maintenance and update of regional contact management database.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

B. EMPLOYER OUTREACH FOR BICYCLING

The Employer Outreach for Bicycling program provides information to area employers to help support and encourage bicycling to work by their employees. This information is included in the Employer Outreach materials provided to employers under the Employer Outreach Program.

Specific activities under the Employer Outreach for Bicycling Program include the preparation of a 24-page guide on biking to work (“Biking to Work in the Washington Area: A Guide for Employers and Employees), and incorporation of WABA bike mentors into the ride-matching database. (WABA’s website now provides users with 24-hour matching to WABA bike mentors, automating a service that previously consumed considerable staff time, and which was available only during office hours).

Commuter Connections staff also provides support for other bike-to-work marketing activities including lunch time seminars, association meetings and strategic mailings.

Cost Estimate: \$15,000

Products: Employer assistance and seminars, and regional Bicycling to Work Guide, updates.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

Jurisdictional Component Project Tasks

A. LOCAL AGENCY FUNDING AND SUPPORT

This task includes the management and oversight of pass-thru funding to local sales jurisdictions to support local jurisdictions, consultants, or TMA staff in implementing voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites. It also involves the review and approval of an annual Scope of Work for each of the ten sales jurisdictions and day to day contract management. This task also includes updating and printing sales materials and employer case studies both in hard copy and for inclusion on the Commuter Connections web site.

Cost Estimate: \$703,035

Products: Oversight to local sales jurisdictions to implement voluntary transportation demand management strategies at private sector employment sites. Bi-annual sales support conference calls and site visits as needed.

Electronic and printed updates of sales materials and case studies.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

VI. TELEWORK

Commuter Connections established a Metropolitan Washington Telework Resource Center to provide information, training, and assistance to individuals and businesses to further in-home and telecenter based telework programs. Activities include development of case studies, and marketing and outreach activities.

Jurisdictional Components of the Metropolitan Washington Telework Resource Center include:

- 1) Educating employers and their employees in Maryland and Virginia on the benefits of teleworking through telemarketing and sales outreach activities.
- 2) Monitoring local, state and federal telecommuting and telework initiatives in Maryland and Virginia.
- 3) Exchanging information with other telework and telecommuting programs around the nation and the world to ensure that the most effective new concepts and approaches are fully known and utilized in the Washington metropolitan region.
- 4) Providing administrative support to the regional Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group.
- 5) Marketing telework to employers in Maryland and Virginia.
- 6) Assisting employers in Maryland and Virginia to develop formal Telework policies, and to initiate or expand telework programs.
- 7) Marketing the services of Telework Centers and providing marketing support for telework centers in Maryland and Virginia through the Metropolitan Washington Telework Center Director's group.

This program's three jurisdictional component tasks are outlined below and the annual total cost is \$162,126.

A. GENERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide information on teleworking to the general public, local agencies, and employers from Maryland and Virginia contacting Commuter Connections through kits and CD-ROMs or videos.

COG/TPB staff will conduct employer telemarketing and outreach services to assist employers in Maryland and Virginia to start or expand telecommute programs.

Cost Estimate: \$37,261

Products: Provide information through kits and CD-ROMs or videos. Conduct telemarketing and sales outreach activities to identify and work with employers in Maryland and Virginia to address teleworking program implementation issues and to develop or update a formal Telework policy.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

B. PROGRAM COORDINATION

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to provide administrative and logistical support for the Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group and for the Washington Metropolitan Telework Center Directors located in Maryland and Virginia. A new activity for FY06 will be updates to the Commuter Connections web site that will include workshop and seminar training materials previously given to employers in a seminar format.

Cost Estimate: \$59,755

Products: Administrative and logistical support for the Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group and for the WMTC Directors.

Update web site to provide workshop and seminar training materials on-line to employers.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006
FY 2005 Annual Progress Report: September 2005
FY 2005 Employer Workshops Survey Report: January 2006

C. TELEWORK OUTREACH AND FOLLOW-UP TO LOCAL EMPLOYERS

Employer outreach services would be provided to enable employers to start or expand telecommute programs in conjunction with local Employer Outreach efforts in Maryland and Virginia. COG/TPB staff would work with employers in Maryland and Virginia on developing or updating a formal Telework policy based on requests from local Employer Outreach jurisdictional sales representatives.

Direct follow-up would be undertaken by COG/TPB staff on telework leads identified by local Employer Outreach sales jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia. Employer site visits and follow-up visits would be made as needed to assist employers either start or expand a telework program or to address existing telework program issues.

Cost Estimate: \$65,110

Products: Receive and review employer leads received from local Employer Outreach sales jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia and document follow-up activities by COG/TPB staff in conducting employer site visits and follow-up visits, and developing or updating formal Telework policies through the Telework Resource Center.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

VII. INFOEXPRESS KIOSKS

The regional information kiosks (InfoExpress) promote traveler information and other alternative transportation services to employers and to the general public. Beginning in 2000, COG staff began maintaining and updating data content, troubleshooting kiosk system problems and providing routine physical maintenance.

Kiosk users can complete an online survey or provide their name and telephone number to be surveyed. The survey records the users' opinions of kiosk features and content, as well as their current commute mode. The results of these surveys are used in conjunction with the State of the Commute survey to evaluate the kiosk component of the Commuter Connections Program.

The regional InfoExpress program was established during FY98 with five sites in Northern Virginia and two sites in the District of Columbia. In addition, two mobile kiosks, one in Northern Virginia and one in the District, were also made available to qualified sites. All nine kiosks were installed with official ribbon cutting ceremonies at each site during February and March 1998.

During FY04, two additional kiosks were developed and implemented in Northern Virginia. Commuter Connections promoted the two new kiosk openings through various marketing efforts coordinated through a contractor. The awareness kickoff included print ads in local community newspapers, postcard mailers in both English and Spanish; mall posters and food-court table tents, napkins and cups; kiosk ambassadors and distribution of giveaway items and slides on movie theater Lobby Entertainment systems.

COG has developed a brochure explaining the features of the InfoExpress kiosk (including illustrations of the InfoExpress kiosk) for potential host site managers. The brochure was updated in FY04 to accommodate the newly added kiosks. Signage on all kiosks was also updated in FY04. The new signage provides dual branding of the InfoExpress and Commuter Connections logos.

This program's jurisdictional component task is outlined below and the annual total cost is \$155,154.

A. MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION OF REGIONAL INFOEXPRESS KIOSKS

During FY 2006, COG/TPB staff will continue to maintain and update content on the InfoExpress kiosk engine and its related applications for the three kiosks currently in the District of Columbia and the 12 kiosks in Northern Virginia. Work will include daily monitoring and evaluation of 15 kiosk operations, kiosk site relocations and lease negotiations as needed for both permanent and mobile kiosks, and monitoring and upgrades to the data communications system for kiosks. COG/TPB staff would also provide maintenance and upgrades of kiosk enclosures, hardware, and peripheral devices as needed. Weekly kiosk site visits will be provided through a kiosk maintenance contractor. Marketing of kiosks will continue through the use of “kiosk ambassadors” provided by the marketing/advertising/public relations contractor. COG/TPB staff would provide management and monitoring of the marketing contract and 15 kiosk site contracts. Staff will also monitor insurance liabilities and update insurance information as needed. Monthly progress reports and an annual progress report will be produced.

Cost Estimate: \$155,154*

Products: Maintain and update content on the InfoExpress kiosk engine and applications.

Daily monitoring and evaluation of 15 kiosk operations.

Kiosk site relocations as needed for both permanent and mobile kiosks.

Monitoring and upgrades to data communications system for kiosks.

Maintenance and upgrades of kiosk enclosures, hardware, and peripheral devices.

Marketing of kiosks through “kiosk ambassadors.”

Management and monitoring of marketing contract and 15 kiosk site contracts.

Monitoring insurance liabilities and updating insurance information as needed.

Monthly progress reports. Annual progress report from FY 2005.

Schedule: July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

**\$60,000 of this budget includes competitively bid work for weekly on-site visits and maintenance by a kiosk maintenance contractor. \$15,000 of this budget will be used for "kiosk ambassadors" to market the use of the kiosks and will be part of the Commuter Connections competitively bid marketing and advertising contract.*